

RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL OF CHORLEY

Council Offices,  
Gillibrand Street,  
CHORLEY, Lancs.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR 1945

Mr. Chairman and Members,

I present herewith my report for the year 1945. It is a little fuller than of late years but not so detailed as it was prior to the war.

AREA:

The area has not changed during the year and the acreage remains at 41,111.

POPULATION:

The estimated population (The Registrar-General's figure) is 24,420. This figure does not include the residents at the Highways Hostel, Buxton.

The figures for the last 4 years are:- 1945 1944 1943 1942  
24,420 24,540 24,970 25,900

The highest estimate for the District was in 1942 when, according to National Registration figures, it was 27,058.

INHABITED HOUSES:

The number of inhabited houses at the end of 1945 is estimated to be 7,416. This figure, I think, will be the highest on record and there are no empty houses except isolated and derelict ones.

RATEABLE VALUE:

The Rateable Value of the District is £172,857, and the sum represented by a penny rate is £687, slightly lower than last year.

The social conditions of the area are those of an agricultural and industrial district. Agriculture, cotton and rayon spinning and weaving, and coal mining are the chief industries and employ most workers. The Royal Ordnance Factory, however, still operates and employs workers from outside the area as well as from it. Although the table relating to population gives no figure greatly in excess of the pre-war figure, the actual persons in the area during the peak period of this factory must have been approximately 50% in excess of the figure given. Basket making is still carried on in one parish. There has been little unemployment amongst fit persons during the year.

THE STAFF OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT IS AS FOLLOWS:

Medical Officer of Health (Part Time)	Dr. John Rigby, M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.
Chief Sanitary Inspector	✓ R.H. Grayson, Cert.R.S.I. & S.I.E.J.B.
First Additional Sanitary Inspector	✓ A. Fowler, Cert.R.S.I.
Second Additional Sanitary Inspector	✓ R. Potts, Cert.R.S.I. & S.I.E.J.B.

The Second Additional Sanitary Inspector only commenced duties at the end of December; his work will be chiefly inspection of houses under the detailed survey which is to be made of the whole area. When sanction was obtained from the Ministry to engage a Second Additional Sanitary Inspector, application had been made for two, and if the survey recommended by the Hobhouse Report is to be carried out within a reasonable time, another Inspector will be needed.

Clerical assistance is given by a temporary clerk, the clerk himself being still in H.M. Forces.

LABORATORY SERVICES AND HOSPITALS:

No change has taken place during the year, swabs are still examined at the nearest General Hospital and can, in most cases, be delivered by hand without delay.



#### AMBULANCES:

The Ambulance Service for accidents and general cases is provided by arrangement with the Municipal Borough of Chorley. For infectious cases the ambulance is kept at the Isolation Hospital and is always available.

#### NURSING SERVICE:

The Queen Alexandra Service operates in this District. In some cases parishes have joined for this work and maintain a nurse who is provided with motor transport. This service is satisfactory and efficient for both sickness and maternity. The Midwifery Service run by the County Council covers the whole of the area. The local hospital has clinics, including V.D. and Skins.

#### STATISTICS:

The figures for 1945 are given and the totals are also compared with those for the previous 3 years:-

<u>BIRTH RATE</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>MALES</u>	<u>FEMALES</u>
<u>LIVE BIRTHS</u>			
Legitimate	353	151	202
Illegitimate	20	12	8
Totals	373	163	210

The Birth Rate per 1,000 of the population is 15.2 compared with 16.1 for England and Wales.

Year	1945	1944	1943	1942
Total Births	373	474	457	411
Rate per 1,000 of population	15.2	19.3	18.3	15.8
Rate per 1,000 population for England and Wales	16.1	17.6	16.5	15.8

<u>DEATH RATE</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>MALES</u>	<u>FEMALES</u>
DEATHS	293	147	146

The Death Rate per 1,000 of the population is 11.9 that for England and Wales being 11.4.

Year	1945	1944	1943	1942
Total Deaths	293	266	301	285
Deaths per 1,000 of population	11.9	11.6	12.0	11.0
Deaths per 1,000 of population for England and Wales	11.4	11.6	12.1	11.6

<u>STILL BIRTHS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>MALES</u>	<u>FEMALES</u>
	16	7	9

The Rate per 1,000 Births is 42.6. The Rates for the preceding 3 years are also shown in comparison:-

Year	1945	1944	1943	1942
	42.6	33.5	38.0	50.0



STATISTICS: (Contd.)

INFANTILE DEATHS UNDER 1 YEAR

The number per 1,000 live births is 50. For comparison, the figures for the 3 preceding years are also given:-

Year	1945	1944	1943	1942
	50	55	52	43

INFANTILE DEATHS UNDER 1 YEAR

MATERNAL DEATHS

There were no maternal deaths during the year. The figures are given for the previous 3 years:-

Year	1945	1944	1943	1942
	NIL	2	2	2

DEATHS FROM

Year	1945	1944	1943	1942
Cancer	42	51	32	43
Mumps	NIL	NIL	NIL	NIL
Whooping Cough	1	NIL	NIL	2
Diarrhoea	NIL	1	1	3

INFECTIOUS DISEASES:

The Infectious Diseases are admitted to the Heath Charnock Isolation Hospital under the Chorley and District Joint Hospital Board.

Puerperal Septicemias are admitted to the Sharoe Green Hospital at Preston, under arrangement with the County Council.

There was no serious outbreak of infectious disease during the year.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION:

Immunisation of school children and those under school age was continued throughout the year and the work was done as in previous years by the family doctor. The number immunised during the year was 291, of whom 244, were under school age and 47 between the ages of 5 and 15 years.

At the end of the year it was estimated that 556 representing 28.03% of children under school age, and 2,251 representing 5.9% of children between 5 and 15 years, were immunised.

The figures at the end of 1944 were 492 or 24.7% of children under school age, and 2,183 or 4.8% of children between 5 and 15 years.

A considerable amount of publicity on this subject was given during the year. A commencement was made during the year with a scheme for giving booster doses to children who had received treatment 3 years or more earlier, and at the end of the year 272 booster doses had been given.

WHOOPING COUGH:

Whooping Cough Vaccine has been available throughout the year but little has actually been used, possibly owing to the lack of publicity.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES:

The Notifiable Diseases are tabulated overleaf and for purposes of comparison the total numbers of cases for the last 5 years are given separately.



TABLE OF NOTIFYABLE DISEASES

Notifiable Diseases	Total Cases at all Ages	Total Cases Notified										65 and over
		Under 1	1	2	3	4	5	10	15	20	35	
Smallpox												
Scarlet Fever	55	1		4	6	3	23	11	4	1	2	
Diphtheria (incl. membranous croup)	24					2	12	1		8	1	
Enteric or Typhoid Fever (excluding Paratyphoid)												
Paratyphoid Fever												
Measles (excluding Rubella)	277	9	25	53	29	32	117	7	2	3		
Whooping Cough	56	6	4	13	13	3	16	1				
Acute Pneumonia (primary and Influenza)	14						2	1		2	2	6 1
Puerperal Pyrexia												
Cerebro-Spinal Fever												
Acute Poliomyelitis												
Acute Polio-encephalitis												
Acute encephalitis lethargica												
Dysentery												
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1		1									
Trachomatis	6									2	2	2
Malaria:												
Contracted in England & Wales												
Contracted abroad												
Any other Diseases Notifiable in District e.g. Chicken-pox												
Any other Disease												
<b>Totals</b>	433	17	29	70	48	40	170	21	6	16	7	6 3



TABLE OF NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE PAST  
6 YEARS

Notifiable Disease	1945	1944	1943	1942	1941	1940
Smallpox						
Scarlet Fever	55	69	74	90	82	177
Diphtheria (incl. membranous group)	24	15	31	47	44	34
Enteric or Typhoid Fever (excluding Paratyphoid)		1	1	2	6	4
Paratyphoid Fever						
Measles (excluding Rubella)	277	84	306	140	70	530
Whooping Cough	56	94	50	64	67	51
Acute Pneumonia (primary and Influenza)	14	19	34	16	13	24
Puerperal Pyrexia			1	2	1	
Cerebro-spinal Fever				7	3	4
Acute Poliomyelitis						
Acute Polio-encephalitis						
Acute encephalitis lethargica						
Dysentery			1			
Ophthalmia Neonatorum	1	4	1	3	4	
Erysipelas	6	6	8	6	6	8
Malaria:						
Contracted in England and Wales						
Contracted abroad						
Any other Diseases notifiable in District e.g. Chicken-pox						
Any other Disease						
Totals	433	290	507	377	296	832

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TUBERCULOSIS:

No difficulty has been experienced in carrying out the Tuberculosis Regulations and Tuberculosis Officers have again given valuable help.

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1945

Age Periods	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Respiratory		Non-Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
Years								
0								
1				1				
5			5	2				
10			2					
15			1	1				
20	1	5		1			1	
25	2	4						
35	3					1	1	
45	2			1		2		
55								
65 and upwards	1	1				1	1	
Totals	9	10	8	6	4	3	2	1

■ Ages not known.

NEW CASES AND DEATHS DURING THE LAST 6 YEARS

Age Periods	1945		1944		1943		1942		1941		1940	
	New Cases	Deaths										
	Years											
0									3	1		
1	1			3		4			6		3	
5	7		3		6	1	4		9		5	
10	2		9		4		1		3		3	2
15	2		1		3		5	1	1	2	3	2
20	7	1	4		6	1	4	1	1	2	1	
25	6		5	1	5	4	8	2	7	2	9	2
35	3	2	3	1	6	1	3		4	2	3	2
45	3	2	2	2	4	1	6	2	2		2	
55		5	1	5	2					1	4	1
65 and upwards	2	2					1		1			
Ages unknown		3										
Totals	33	10	32	5	12	10	36	6	37	10	33	9



### SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

#### WATER:

The bulk of the water supplied in this area is obtained from the Manchester Corporation and is under constant supervision and examination.

Four samples of water were taken for bacteriological examination during the year, three were found to be satisfactory and in the fourth case evidence of organic pollution was followed by chlorination.

Of the 7,416 houses in the area at the end of 1945, not less than 6,575 of them were being supplied with water under pressure from the Council's mains. In addition to these a large number of the houses in Hoghton and Brindle have a piped supply from a private system, unfortunately it is inadequate, and in addition it is impossible to supply water to other houses in great need of it from this private supply. During the year great steps have been made in formulating a scheme to cover these two parishes, and if carried out as planned, few houses and farms in these two scattered parishes will be without an adequate supply of wholesome water.

A small extension in Seedy Lane, Maudsley, enables four houses to obtain a sufficient water supply.

In Brotherton the size of the main was increased to give this parish a better supply.

The first thing we learn with regard to water is that an adequate supply of wholesome water is a fundamental sanitary necessity, and it cannot be overstressed that to improve the supply where necessary and to extend the service, even to isolated parts of the area, should be a matter under constant consideration until every house and farm and factory in the area has a plentiful supply of water, the quality of which is beyond all doubt.

#### SEWERAGE:

The lack of adequate sewers and suitable modern sewage disposal systems in this area is a serious matter. It is, however, quite likely that had not the emergency of the last few years held up work of this kind, some headway would have been made in remedying this. As it is, the Council is now compelled to launch out in a building programme which, a few years ago, would have appeared startling, and in many cases temporary arrangements for sewage disposal will have to be made in parishes which should already possess a sewer and proper means of disposal.

Furthermore, there are, in this district, several areas of development carried out during the last few years prior to the war, which have only makeshift arrangements for sewage disposal, one of these is especially bad, and it is essential that those areas be improved as quickly as possible by providing the sewers required to convey foul drains to a proper point of disposal. Also, as I have said before, it is impossible to carry out any large scale conversion scheme until sewers capable of dealing with the increased flow are available.

#### SANITARY ACCOMMODATION:

No large scale conversions took place during the year and the number of pail closets and privy middens, therefore, remains very high.

There are approximately 2,372 pail closets and 960 privy middens and dry ash pits in the area.

The conversions carried out during the year were:-

Pail Closet to Water Closet	=	10.
Privy Midden to Water Closet	=	30.
Privy Midden to Pail Closet	=	8.

#### RODENT CONTROL:

The work of Rodent Control was actively carried out during the year under the Scheme operated by the Ministry of Food. The District, after the first survey, has been kept under constant re-inspection. Co-operation with the Lancashire War Agricultural Executive Committee has been aimed at.

The number of infestations dealt with was 50 and it is estimated that 523 rats were killed.

Refuse tips and sewage disposal works have had regular treatment and have never been so free from rats.



#### CAMPING:

No Camping Licences were issued during the year. Van dwellers of the wandering type have not been numerous but have, on occasions, called for a certain amount of control.

There are, as you are aware, several caravans in this area, the sites of which were rated years ago and no difficulties have arisen in connection with those.

#### SMOKE ABATEMENT:

No action was taken during the year.

#### SCHOOLS:

There are 52 schools in the area, including the Rivington and Blackrod Grammar School. Water supply is piped in every case and generally is satisfactory. The sanitary accommodation is, however, far from satisfactory, consisting of pail closets in 20 cases. The improvement of schools as envisaged in the Education Act should remedy this in a reasonable time. No school, irrespective of whether or not there is a main sewer within easy access, must be without proper water closets of a size suitable for the children who are to use them.

#### SCAVENGING:

No alteration was made in the method of scavenging during the year, approximately half being done by direct labour and the remainder by contract.

The approximate number of nail closets (2,572) and privy middens and dry ash pits (900), is an indication of the nature of scavenging in this area.

Salvage work has been continued but the amount of material collected has fallen considerably compared with the past period.

#### HOUSING:

Housing is, I think, the greatest of Local Authorities problems, and the task of providing sufficient good houses for all who need them is the greatest job that Local Authorities have placed upon them.

Regarding existing houses it has not been possible to do more than deal with defects which, in themselves, were nuisances. Extensive repairs or reconditioning has not been possible, in fact it has been more difficult to get minor defects remedied as the year progressed, furthermore, extensive reconditioning would affect the provision of new houses which is the solution to the acute shortage and must not be delayed.

Two very important things, however, occurred during the year in connection with housing, firstly work was commenced on two housing sites in Coppull and Eccles, and secondly that the provision of new houses had recommenced after a break of six years, it was of course, much more than six years since the Rural Council provided any houses.

I have said above that the provision of sufficient good houses for all who need them is the biggest job Local Authorities have been asked to undertake. The truth of this statement will be realised I think, if ones mind is cast back to the period between the two wars. The expression "House Hunting" was with us the whole time and there is no doubt, in my mind, that there has never been a sufficiency of really suitable houses. However, the start in provision of good houses has now begun and I hope that generally, and particularly in this area, the work will not stop until such times as there are first class houses available for all.

The second thing of importance is the commencement of the survey involving all dwellings suitable for occupation by the working classes. With the staff available and the multifarious duties for which the Public Health Department was responsible in days gone by, such a survey was not possible and as a result an accurate assessment of the District's needs was impossible. Some time will be required to carry out this survey but when completed it will be of the greatest value for it will allow proper planning of the houses to be built by the Local Authority over a fairly long period.

At the moment it is only possible to work on the standard of houses it was possible to demand before the war, but it is hoped that this will be greatly improved and that it will be possible in reconditioned houses, to demand water laid on, bulk hot water supply (back boiler or electric or gas storage heaters), separate bathroom, water closet even if drained to a septic tank if a suitable outfall is available for the



#### HOUSING: (Contd.)

effluent, and above all, a new standard for overcrowding where only the bedroom accommodation is taken into account and the living rooms are ignored for this purpose. If the Law is altered to demand such a house then the number of houses which fall into the category as not capable of being made into really good houses, will, of course, be very much higher, as quite a large number will not lend themselves to such adaptations.

The commencement of a survey to bring up-to-date the overcrowding survey which the Council mentioned has also been commenced. Only one parish (Coppull) was completed and it is proposed to include the figures in the next report. I cannot, however, miss the opportunity of saying that approximately one house in ten in that parish is housing more than one family, this would indicate that to overcome the acute shortage of houses, approximately 10% of the number of existing houses or 750 will be required and until this number has been provided, it will not be possible to consider replacing houses which are known to be worn out.

#### MILK SUPPLY:

It is with regret that I report it has not been possible to devote so much time as desirable to this important task. In all 280 visits have been made to milk promises and dairies and cowsheds inspected at each place.

Pasteurised Milk. There are no pasteurising plants in the district, but two supplementary licences allowing pasteurised milk to be retailed in the area were issued during the year.

#### DISINFECTION:

81 Disinfections were carried out during the year.

#### PETROLEUM LICENCES:

41 Licences to store petroleum spirit were issued during the year.  
1 Licence to store calcium carbide was issued.

#### TOTAL INSPECTIONS:

During the year the total inspections made was 2,897.

#### INFORMAL NOTICES:

The total Informal Notices served was 860.  
The total number of Informal Notices complied with was 842.

#### STATUTORY NOTICES:

2 Statutory Notices were served.  
No legal proceedings were taken during the year.

I am, Ladies and Gentlemen,  
Your obedient Servant,

JOHN RIGBY.

Medical Officer of Health.

